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<p>This paper is aimed at convincing the joint task force commander that deception offers distinct advantages to even today's military that relies upon the idea of overwhelming combined arms force to achieve objectives. <i>The joint task force commander should expand the current scope of deception, treat it as an offensive weapon, and fully integrate it into theater plans because it does three things: it helps create the illusion of strengths where weaknesses exist in the commander's forces; it can manipulate the enemy into a position of disadvantage at the time and place of the commander's choosing; and it can lead to the element of surprise, even at the theater strategic level.</i> Historical case studies indicate that deception is a tool that can create an exploitable imbalance in forces, to the theater commander's advantage, by manipulating an adversary's actions in time and space. Possibly by such modest means as education, training, and reforms to staff structures we could better exploit the advantages that deception brings to the commander. Even in the modern, sensor-rich environment, deception is an economical, proven, and powerful weapon that the joint force commander must use, and guard against, by employing the talents of a dedicated and discrete team of deception professionals.</p>					
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**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, RI**

**ALLIES IN THE SHADOWS: WHY WE NEED
OPERATIONAL DECEPTION**

By

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A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Abstract

This paper is aimed at convincing the joint task force commander that deception offers distinct advantages to even today's military that relies upon the idea of overwhelming combined arms force to achieve objectives. *The joint task force commander should expand the current scope of deception, treat it as an offensive weapon, and fully integrate it into theater plans because it does three things: it helps create the illusion of strengths where weaknesses exist in the commander's forces; it can manipulate the enemy into a position of disadvantage at the time and place of the commander's choosing; and it can lead to the element of surprise, even at the theater strategic level.* Historical case studies indicate that deception is a tool that can create an exploitable imbalance in forces, to the theater commander's advantage, by manipulating an adversary's actions in time and space. Possibly by such modest means as education, training, and reforms to staff structures we could better exploit the advantages that deception brings to the commander. Even in the modern, sensor-rich environment, operational deception is an economical, proven, and powerful weapon that the joint force commander must use, and guard against, by employing the talents of a dedicated and discrete team of deception professionals.

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INTRODUCTION

“Military deception operations are conducted by commanders of combatant commands and subordinate joint forces in support of overall campaign objectives.”¹ According to joint doctrine, military deception consists of “actions executed to deliberately mislead adversary military decision makers as to friendly military capabilities, intentions, and operations, thereby causing the adversary to take specific actions that will contribute to the accomplishment of the friendly mission.”²

This paper is aimed at convincing the joint task force commander that deception offers undervalued capabilities that can bring distinct advantages to even today’s military that relies upon the idea of overwhelming combined arms force to achieve objectives. The American philosophy of overwhelming force ignores the tried-and-true lesson of history that no military force is ever superior to the adversary in every respect. Deceivers can make up for these weaknesses for a set period of time, even at the theater level of war. For deception to be considered effective at the operational level of war, it must have an operational impact on an entire campaign.³ This occurred in World War II, and those successes are timeless lessons in operational art. Second World War examples remain the most striking deception lessons in history since they were the most complex schemes ever devised, there were many of them, and they proved that it takes time and experience to develop effective deception plans and operators.

The basic principles of warfare never change. *The joint task force commander needs deception and should integrate it into theater plans because does three things: it helps create the illusion of strengths where weaknesses exist in the commander’s forces; it can manipulate the enemy into a position of disadvantage at the time and place of the commander’s choosing; and it can lead to the element of surprise, even at the theater strategic level.* Except for the World War

II years, the United States has not been a great practitioner of deception arts and sciences. In December 1941 the enemies and allies of the United States already had “two to four years continuous, high-pressure experience in matters of strategic intelligence and deception.”⁴ Except for the heroic achievement of cracking some of the Japanese ciphers, the Americans came to the big dance almost empty-handed.⁵ Nearly all strategic and operational deception in the European theater was left in the hands of the British.⁶ In a study by Barton Whaley, no significant deception planning originated in Washington until October 1944, “four months after the British had conclusively demonstrated its value in the Normandy landings.”⁷

Emphasis on deception as a primary operational art has always been difficult for Americans. To this day the only theater deception efforts undertaken by the United States since World War II remain those that took place to fool Saddam and to protect American forces in the western desert during the 1991 Persian Gulf War.*

Why are we not good at incorporating deception in the defense of liberty? For Americans, even at war, the concept of deception is an uncomfortable idea, widely considered an indicator of weakness, and is somehow therefore unethical.⁸ In 1943, Admiral Ernest J. King, in turning down the advantage of surprise that miniature submarines offered, said it was the tool “of despair of have-not-nations...not for us.”⁹ Contemporary U.S. leaders often publicly condemn the sneakiness and trickery of Al Qaeda and the Iraqi militia as something below our standards.

The protracted campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan have exposed weaknesses in troop strengths and materiel available to the United States for long-term global operations. Both the Iraqis and Al Qaeda understand that American military strength has limits in both time and

* For a detailed description and analysis of these deceptions read Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, *The General's War* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1995).

space. Deception can help us mask our weaknesses, but actions need to be planned before, executed during, and followed up after campaigns to build the illusion of strength, where our weaknesses might exist, in the eyes of the enemy. U.S. attempts at deception have traditionally been ad hoc, not methodically planned with consistency at every level.¹⁰ We need to accept that deception is a necessity and use it to our advantage. According to RAND analyst Scott Gerwehr, deception helps to reduce casualties, to reduce detections by the enemy of friendly forces, to increase the likelihood of surprising the enemy, to expand the number of options that friendly forces can carry out, and generally to place more burdens upon the enemy because “they’re lost in your world of mirrors.”¹¹

ANALYSIS AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A Lesson in Maximizing Forces in the Eyes of the Enemy

In 1940 the British were faced with securing a vast global empire with inadequate forces. Out of necessity, the British had to develop theories and comprehensive plans for deception to deal with a cunning and powerful enemy. In those dark days, General Archibald Wavell, one of a small circle of Churchill’s top leaders in deception activities, sent a memorandum to the British Chiefs of Staff outlining basic concepts for stratagems that are still relevant today. They include: “‘False information or disguise’; ‘feigned retreat’ while really preparing for attack; the ‘encouragement of treachery’; and the ‘weakening of the enemy’s morale.’”¹² These basic concepts matured into a formalized command structure and execution system.

Deception needs to be plausible and, more importantly, it must be telegraphed in a way to cause the enemy to see it and interpret it as intended by the deceiver. Centralized control and secrecy are imperatives and involve not only deceiving the enemy, but sometimes deceiving the ally as well. Churchill understood the need for secrecy and centralized control, and took the

unprecedented step of making deception an institution in both military affairs and statehood.¹³

The small investment in men and materiel would prove well worth the effort. One of the initial windfalls from this effort occurred in North Africa in the fall of 1940.

A British army of only 36,000 men made use of disguised strength, and the feigning of retreat while really preparing for attack, to outfox an Italian army of over 310,000 men.¹⁴ The North African theater was crucial to the British. They could not afford to lose the Suez Canal or the Persian Gulf. The Suez was the lifeline to Middle East oil interests and to India. The theater commander at the time, General Archibald Wavell, through the strategic direction of London, enlisted the efforts of the deception genius Brigadier Dudley Wrangel Clarke.¹⁵ Wavell was convinced of the need for a dedicated unit to coordinate and implement deception.¹⁶ Clarke was placed in charge of A Force, the North African theater component of what would later become the strategic nerve center of deception, the London Controlling Section, or LCS. Clarke, under the direction of Wavell, planned and executed an elaborate deception program using every imaginable technique to mislead the Italians into believing that a much larger British army existed on their southern flank. This provided time for British forces to concentrate on a surprise attack and for reinforcements to arrive from England.¹⁷

On the front near Alexandria, Clarke used rubber tanks, field guns, and 2-ton trucks, and built dummy roads and tank tracks to create a phony army on the Italian right flank.¹⁸ He employed an army of Arab camel- and horsemen dragging harrow-like devices to raise huge clouds of dust, all of which, when photographed from the air, appeared to be a great field army more powerful than the Italian commander's own.¹⁹ By maximizing the size of the British army on the Italian right flank, the British manipulated the Italians into moving their army to what was thought a safer position on the northern end of the front. Unfortunately for the Italians, this

is where Wavell's small army massed for the counterattack. Maximizing the size of Wavell's army in one area had the added benefits of manipulating the enemy into a position of disadvantage and allowing the British army to surprise the Italians and rout them.

Clarke's tactical deception efforts on a theater scale resulted in a stunning victory for the British and catastrophic defeat for the Italian victims. This early North African experience proved to Churchill that deception could manufacture strengths where weaknesses existed. Ultimately, the British army, composed of only two divisions, advanced westward 650 miles into Libya, took 130,000 prisoners, 400 tanks, and 1,290 guns with minimal losses in men and equipment.²⁰ Thus ended the Italian threat in North Africa; the Germans were forced to transfer resources from Europe to aid in their rescue. Of course, this later brought on its own problems as the war in North Africa progressed, leading to the Torch landings in November 1942. Nonetheless, deception with strategic emphasis and centralized operational command structure was instrumental in these early British efforts.

In response to the success in North Africa, Churchill made deception a top personal priority by forming the London Controlling Section in the spring of 1941 to centralize strategic, theater, and tactical deception efforts. London's talented deceivers executed elaborate campaigns throughout the rest of the war that often left Hitler puzzled about the actual size of allied forces; in fact, "The Germans, while extremely wily and clever at deception, would have nothing comparable, and the LCS and its associated agencies would contribute handsomely—even decisively—to victory."²¹

A Lesson in Manipulating the Enemy into a Position of Disadvantage

Preparations for Operation Overlord, the invasion of Europe, began months in advance and were directed from the highest strategic level down to the tactical level by a small group of

deception experts. Overlord was masked by Bodyguard, the most elaborate denial and deception operation ever conducted, involving layers upon layers of dovetailed projects designed to

- Cause the Wermacht to make faulty troop dispositions due to perceived military threats to Norway
- Hide the correct target date and invasion point for the main assault, and
- Induce faulty tactical disposition of forces following the main invasion by threats against the Pas de Calais.²²

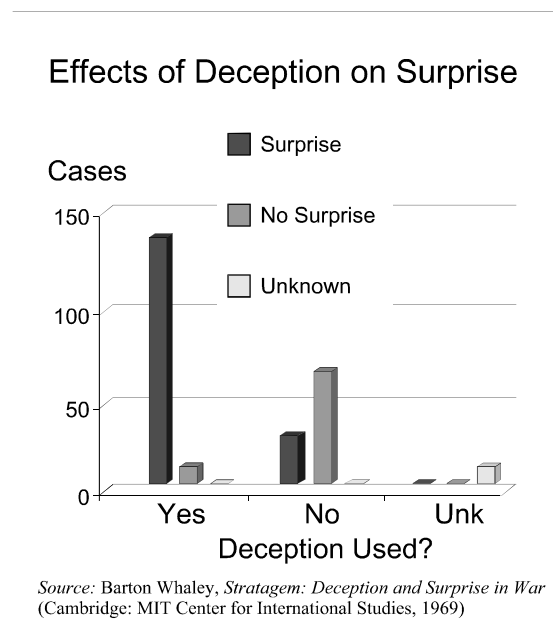
From the beginning, Operation Bodyguard was directed toward ambiguity deception, with the purpose of tying down as many German divisions as possible.²³ In addition to the deceptions to invade Norway and the Pas de Calais, the Allies cultivated German indecision with fake efforts to invade the Balkans (Zeppelin), the western Mediterranean (Vendetta and Ferdinand), and the French Biscayan coast (Ironside). There were even efforts beyond the scope of the military establishment. Diplomatic deceptions were directed at Scandinavian governments (Graffham and Royal Flush) that would telegraph fake Allied intentions to the Germans.

None of the deception planners for Bodyguard were foolish enough to believe that the true intentions of Overlord could be hidden for very long after the invasion began; however, indecisiveness on the part of the Germans in the initial phase of the operation was enough to ensure the safety of the vulnerable landing fleet. The Germans were manipulated into inaction, rather than action; this left them at a great theater strategic disadvantage during the early days of the invasion. The aim of Bodyguard was to “ensure that the Germans would see it through a veil of illusions, created by every trick the double agents, radio transmitters, ships, aircraft, and scientists could deliver. From the moment the whirlwind struck the coast, the effects of deception were felt everywhere by the bewildered defenders on the ground.”²⁴ The deception succeeded by

preventing the German army from using their mass against the vulnerable invasion forces. Eisenhower later commented that the German Fifteenth Army, had they been committed properly, could have defeated the invasion by sheer weight of numbers; and Omar Bradley alluded to the value of theater deception efforts in his memoirs, stating, “the enemy immobilized nineteen divisions and played into our hands in the biggest single hoax of the war.”²⁵ Though they remain obscure in the annals of history, no efforts of this complexity could have succeeded without dedicated specialists orchestrating the effort. Deception was an essential component of the Allied effort against a formidable peer level opponent. Bodyguard manipulated a peer competitor to the point of indecision and therefore into a position of disadvantage at the theater strategic level. Although by some estimates the United States currently outguns every potential adversary, we should not be fooled into thinking that we will never again face a peer competitor.

A Lesson in Achieving the Element of Surprise

More than one study indicates that deception is the key to achieving the element of surprise. Joint doctrine lists surprise as one of the fundamental principles of war. Proper



deception techniques can effectively play upon an adversary’s belief system to paint a picture of predictability in one area while planning a surprise attack in another. In the Central Intelligence Agency’s 1980 study of deception, the cornerstone of good deception is Magruder’s Principle: “It is generally easier to induce an opponent to maintain a preexisting belief than to present notional evidence to change that belief. Thus, it may be more fruitful

to examine how an opponent's existing beliefs can be turned to advantage than to attempt to alter these views.”²⁶ Successful deception practitioners adhere to this principle, and for good reason. When operational deception activities were oriented to the existing beliefs of the enemy, surprise resulted in 106 out of 110, or 96 percent, of battles studied in the CIA sample group.²⁷

“Few nations have suffered as greatly from the consequences of surprise and deception as the Soviet Union.”²⁸ The Germans caught Stalin by surprise in June 1941 through a complex deception system that took advantage of Stalin's preexisting belief that Germany would not invade the Soviet Union. Hitler devised a clever plan. He knew that the buildup for Operation Barbarossa could not go undetected, so a year-long campaign was conducted to convince the Russians that the buildup on their eastern frontier was part of a training maneuver for the widely known invasion preparation for Britain (Operation Sea Lion), and that Barbarossa was actually a deception diversion to cover Sea Lion.²⁹ Amidst tight control similar to the British and their LCS, German strategic deception planning emanated from Hitler's personal planning staff, the OKW.³⁰ By deploying active and mutually supporting security operations, rather than depending upon passive measures, German efforts were “well calculated to fit the preconceptions of their enemies at each stage of the developing operation.”³¹ These themes went on to achieve almost complete believability within the intelligence services of Russia (and Britain, the United States, Japan, and other countries).³² The Barbarossa invasion caught the Russians so flat-footed that after six months the German army had advanced 800 kilometers into the Soviet Union to the outskirts of Moscow and Leningrad, shattered much of the peacetime Russian army, disrupted the Soviet command structure, and forced a drastic restructuring of the armed forces.³³ The Russians would learn a great deal about the utility of active security measures in the form of

deception, and by war's end would be masters of it, but it would take trial and error, experience, and emphasis at the top to make it an effective strategic, operational, and tactical weapon.

Early in the war the Russians realized that it would take more than firepower to defeat a German army superior to their own. Stalin centralized Soviet deception operations to obviate detection. Very few officers were aware of the deception efforts, and then only after approval by Stalin himself. Command and Control worked its way down from Stalin through the State Defense Committee (GKO), through STAVKA (General Headquarters of the Soviet Supreme High Command), the General Staff, and from there to the Fronts (equivalent to a U.S. Army Group).³⁴

Soviet theory, like that of Britain and Germany, presumes that operational deception cannot succeed without focused and centrally controlled efforts at the national, operational, and tactical levels. Even with a strong command structure, it takes time and practice to master deception skills. Experience has demonstrated to the Russians that “to secure surprise blows, the government and military control organs of the aggressor states mobilize all methods and means of influencing the enemy, including political, diplomatic, and military acts, in order to hide from them the secret concept and timing for unleashed aggression.”³⁵

For the Russians, *maskirovka*, translated as camouflage, or deception, includes a complex list of measures from disinformation and misdirection at the strategic level to camouflaging an individual tank or communications post at the tactical level.³⁶ The scope of *maskirovka* includes securing the operations and activities of forces, misleading the enemy as to the presence, disposition, combat readiness, and condition of forces, and contributing to the element of surprise toward the achievement of the objectives.³⁷ All of these efforts require as much attention by the theater commander as do air, land, and maritime component activities, especially if

deception efforts include the use of these forces. The Soviet military writer A. Volpe alludes to the importance of the commander's designs for deception plans. Volpe considers deception to be "the most delicate of maskirovka means" that requires nothing less than "the genius of the commander."³⁸

The Soviet strategic defensive at Kursk is a good example of the maturing of Red Army maskirovka efforts into an effective tool for creating the element of surprise. Intelligence, as in every deception plan, played a key part in these efforts. By the spring of 1943 Soviet intelligence could piece together an accurate concept of German intentions in the Kursk salient. Upon this intelligence the Soviets built a theater defense plan that included a short-term defense in depth rapidly followed by a massive armored counterstroke at Orel.³⁹ The Soviets put in place a deception plan that led the Germans to believe that a major counteroffensive was to occur instead in the southern part of the front. Konev, commander of the Steppe Front, (equivalent to a U.S. Army Group), issued a special maskirovka directive on 5 July 1943: it ordered army and corps commanders to take measures including the camouflage of troops, depots, defensive lines and all critical objectives.⁴⁰ Plans for deceiving the enemy included elaborate false supply points, unit concentrations, and objectives; plans for erecting false air defense networks including dummy defensive gun positions; and counterdeception efforts by reconnaissance units to assess the effectiveness of camouflaging works and maskirovka efforts.⁴¹ The Soviets misled the Germans into shifting the bulk of their reserves south, opening the way for a surprise attack in the north in the Belgorod-Khar'kov region.⁴² Caught by surprise and lacking reserves, the Germans were defeated along the Belgorod-Khar'kov-Poltava axis, dooming German prospects for defense forward of the Dnepr River.⁴³ The result of these efforts was a stunning victory that began turning the tide on the operational and strategic German advance. Later, General F. von

Mellenthin confirmed the consequences of Red Army deception efforts: “The most clever camouflage of the Russians should be emphasized again. We did not manage to detect even one minefield or anti-tank area until such time as the first tank was blown up by a mine, or the Russian anti-tank guns opened fire.”⁴⁴ The maskirovka efforts that helped lead to surprise at Kursk would not have been possible without a dedicated, trained, and experienced staff at the strategic, operational, and tactical level, fully supported by the national command authorities and by General Konev, the theater combatant commander.

IMPLICATIONS OF LESSONS LEARNED FOR TODAY’S JOINT OPERATIONS

Deception, like the brain and the body, requires regular exercise to stay fit. Current joint theory may be too narrow to lead planners to success at any level other than the tactical when facing a true peer adversary. It restricts the commander to military deception in the military phase of operations. It does not call for a comprehensive, centrally controlled, and executed program involving potentially the full range of national, theater, and tactical assets. Doctrine is weak on calling for deception preparation of the battlespace long before conflict begins. Let me reemphasize that, according to Joint Publication 3-58, deceptions are “those actions executed to deliberately mislead adversary military decision makers as to friendly military capabilities, intentions, and operations, thereby causing the adversary to take specific actions that will contribute to the accomplishment of the friendly mission.”⁴⁵

Deception is a weapon. It adds immeasurably to the commander’s ability to economize force. It enhances the ability of the JTF commander to exploit the fog of war. It can induce an adversary to deploy and employ theater forces out of balance in time and space with those of friendly forces. Deception warfare is a distinct and separate discipline within the joint task force.

Note that these ideas are in direct contrast to Clausewitz: “Analogous things in war—plans and orders issued for appearances only, false reports designed to confuse the enemy, etc.—have as a rule so little strategic value that they are used only if a ready-made opportunity presents itself. They should not be considered as a significant independent field of action at the disposal of the commander.”⁴⁶ While there are examples of deception failures that are not discussed in this paper, the previous case studies are part of a rich repertoire of successful deception efforts. Clausewitz makes a good counterargument for the utility of deception, but Michael Handel notes that for Clausewitz: “In the age of mass mobilization and large-scale battles, deception was perceived as a tool of no more than marginal importance. Neither Clausewitz nor Jomini foresaw the possibility of achieving surprise on the higher operational and strategic levels of land warfare.”⁴⁷

To disprove Clausewitz’s skepticism, planners must have a talented imagination and pay strict attention to detail. Success requires access to and support from all levels of the nation’s military, political, economic, diplomatic, and moral assets. Deception planners might need to have access to the most sensitive sources and methods of intelligence collection as they did in World War II, when they had open access to Enigma intercepts and human intelligence sources.

Professional deceivers understand the capabilities and limitations of their art. At the strategic level the maxims of Sun Tzu may apply: “those skilled in war subdue the enemy’s army without battle; to subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.”⁴⁸ However, at the operational level deception deals more with making the battlefield at hand more favorable to the commander’s operational plans for accomplishing the objective. Evidence indicates that surprise and subsequent victory are more often achieved when sound deception plans are developed early and employed throughout the campaign.

For skeptics who believe that deception does not warrant more emphasis than it currently receives as a component of Information Operations and subordinate staffing function of the J-3, it should be emphasized that deception warfare is not just information, intelligence, or psychological operations, but a unique artist's palette made up of resources from each of these functional areas as well as others. The main objective of deception at the operational level of warfare is to use any and all available resources to manipulate the commitment of enemy forces at the wrong time and in the wrong place, for the wrong reasons.⁴⁹

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR JOINT OPERATIONS

One recommendation for elevating operational deception is to include a J-9 operational deception directorate on the component commander staff. This might result in more direct access, and better coordination (with the permission of the joint force commander) with strategic and tactical leadership outside of the operational environment, including ambassadors, senior leaders at the State Department, Pentagon, and White House, and sometimes including the President. "This will ensure all instruments of power are integrated into deception planning, and all actions are consistent with the deception story. High-level centralized planning ensures that critical information, which otherwise might remain compartmentalized, can be shrewdly exploited for deception purposes."⁵⁰ This structural change may require a change in joint doctrine to expand deception beyond the boundaries of military on military activities.

A second recommendation is that deception may need to be an institution in its own right with a dedicated joint school to train deception specialty officers and enlisted personnel. Making it a sub staff function of the J-3 masks it from the commander's immediate attention. Additionally, too many people have access to this sensitive information, making deception plans prone to discovery. National leaders might refrain from using deception because they may not be

comfortable with exposing highly classified methods and sources of intelligence to lower-level staff functionaries. Secrecy requires centralized control and limited access to all deception activities.

CONCLUSION

This paper began as an effort to illustrate, using case studies, why the United States needs to become adept at deception operations. It began as an attempt to discover common themes about deception command, control, and concepts, but research showed that theory, doctrine, practices, and formal command structures varied widely from one organization to another. Some operational deception programs were so clandestine that only loose staffing structures were formalized. The planning and command functions coalesced around the specific needs of the deception mission. Many were controlled directly from the highest levels of national leadership, such as the deception efforts prior to Overlord and the efforts of Soviet Front commanders in preparation for the titanic counterstrokes against the German army on the Eastern front. It was learned that deception theory, doctrine, organization, and practice takes many years and many creative, perceptive minds to develop.

The Soviets learned painful lessons about the advantages of surprise when they were victimized in the opening days of Barbarossa. These bloody lessons were not lost. In later years when developing plans for NATO, the Soviets ranked surprise and deception with the same importance as arms and manpower.⁵¹ The Russians were well aware that the large reserve armies needed to strike the West could not be activated and moved to the front lines without alarming NATO. But somehow the Germans had succeeded in disguising the massive lead-up to the invasion of the Soviet homeland. Maskirovka became a central theme in any victory against the West. The Soviets knew that complete surprise was not possible, however, just enough surprise

could neutralize NATO's early warning and surveillance systems, providing the Red Army the time to drive deep into Western Europe.⁵² Certainly today's adversaries such as al Qaeda are counting on the same degree of surprise to propel them to their vision of victory.

The moral character of the United States may be an obstacle to military efforts at deception plans and practices, however, it is clear that "deception and diversion are not ends in themselves; they are the means of achieving surprise."⁵³ We should weigh the advantages and consequences of deception at every level of war and take note of historical consequences before discounting the clear advantages it brings to us. Operational deception reached a level of complexity and success during the Second World War that can teach us valuable lessons.

Even the advent of the space age has not diminished the potential for deceiving or being deceived. Since the early 1970s, multitudes of information-gathering satellites have been placed in orbit to monitor sensitive sites around the world. Much of the emphasis is on nuclear weapons research, production, storage, and launch facilities—a throwback to the Cold War. In December 1995 the United States exerted substantial diplomatic pressure on the government of India after satellite and presumably other intelligence sources revealed preparations for a nuclear weapons test at the Pokhran facility, site of the 1974 nuclear test.⁵⁴ The U.S. ambassador to India used satellite imagery to persuade India to (supposedly) cease their nuclear test preparations.⁵⁵ Despite these efforts that were clearly supported by our intelligence agencies employing a vast array of satellites, analysts, spies, and communications intercepts, we were unable to detect India's preparations for the 1998 nuclear weapons test.⁵⁶ How did they do it under watchful eyes? They targeted the U.S. intelligence community and national leadership by hiding the plans for and the timing of the nuclear blast, using a centrally directed deception plan that included diplomatic

dissembling, misinformation, and camouflage and concealment efforts to misdirect the attention of foreign intelligence-collection capabilities.⁵⁷

In the case of India the United States fell for age-old trickery that is just as relevant today as it was in the earliest days of warfare. Understanding deception and actively pursuing these efforts at the highest level of command reduces the risk of becoming a victim.

Deception is a force multiplier in time and in space. It can create strengths where weaknesses exist. When directed properly, within the realm of tight security, it can ensure the element of surprise for the JTF commander. Deception can conceal the size, scope, timing, and intent of operational plans. It can help manipulate the enemy into a position of weakness. Even when the objective and avenue of approach are known by the enemy, deception efforts can misdirect or confuse an enemy commander just long enough to leave him in the lurch and assure victory.

In both effort and resources, operational deception provides maximum bang for the buck. Take, for example, an analysis of Operation Fortitude, the most complex and costly deception of all time. By economic accounting, if we use Fortitude as the standard measure, deception is relatively cheap:

It succeeded in keeping nineteen of Hitler's divisions tied down in reserve for fully sixty-six days after the D-Day landings at Normandy. The total cost of all D-Day deception operations was well under 1 percent of the invasion force. Fortitude required the full-time services for about a year of about eighteen deception planners, the part-time attention of perhaps twenty senior staff planners and intelligence officers, operational commitments of roughly 800 radio technicians...who were busily simulating the radio traffic of two phantom armies, several camouflage and construction companies...building dummy installations, about 1,000 air force personnel to crew and service the ninety aircraft flying on D-Day spoofing missions, about 200 sailors for the eighteen small launches involved in misleading the German coastal early-warning system, six Special Air Service men parachuted on diversionary missions, the ten members of Twenty ("Double-Cross") Committee directing the disinformation campaign of about eleven of the forty German double-agents then in Britain, perhaps a 100 or so

agents and under-ground members engaged in spreading false rumors on the Continent, and Lieutenant Clifton James, who had been co-opted from the British Army Pay Corps to simulate General Montgomery. The total loss among the deception forces was one bomber crew (its crew safely parachuting), four of the SAS paratroopers taken prisoner (and later murdered), and a few tons of aluminum strip airdropped to deceive German radar.⁵⁸

Operational deception is the shadowy ally of theater strategic operations, but in order to succeed it must be directed and coordinated first at the highest national level, then cascade down to the tactical level. Of course we should *never* allow our own government to conduct political or military deception to take advantage of its own people. But deception in wartime, in the defense of liberty, is a tool we cannot afford to ignore.

Churchill's axiom is one for the ages: "In wartime, truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies."⁵⁹

NOTES

¹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine for Military Deception, Joint Publication 3-58 (Washington, DC: 31 May 1996), i.

² Ibid., v.

³ Dr. Milan N. Vego, Professor of Joint Military Operations, United States Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, interview by author, 7 May 2004, United States Naval War College, Conolly Hall, Newport, RI.

⁴ Barton Whaley, Stratagem: Deception and Surprise in War (Cambridge: MIT Center for International Studies, 1969), 52.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ J. Bowyer Bell, "Toward a Theory of Deception," International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence, 16 (Summer 2003): 251.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Keith Epstein, "Report Advises Military To Learn From Nature The Art Of Deception", 31 March 2003. <<http://news.tbo.com/news/MGAO2OMYXDD.html>> [6 May 2003].

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Anthony Cave Brown, Bodyguard of Lies (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 46.

¹³ Ibid., 47.

¹⁴ Ibid., 48.

¹⁵ Jon Latimer, Deception in War (New York: The Overlook Press, 2001), 120.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Brown, 49–50.

¹⁸ Ibid., 49.

- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 50.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² Latimer, 209.
- ²³ Douglas V. Smith, Military Deception and Operational Art (Newport: United States Naval War College, 1993), 7.
- ²⁴ Latimer, 232.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 238.
- ²⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Research and Development, Deception Research Program, Deception Maxims: Fact and Folklore (Washington, DC: April 1980), 5.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 9.
- ²⁸ Michael I. Handel, ed., Strategic and Operational Deception in the Second World War (London: Frank Cass, 1987), 175.
- ²⁹ Roy Godson & James J. Wirtz, Strategic Denial and Deception: The Twenty-First Century Challenge (London: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 81–82.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 80.
- ³¹ Ibid., 81.
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ Handel, 177.
- ³⁴ Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, ed., Soviet Strategic Deception (Lexington, MA: Hoover Institution Press, 1987), 15.
- ³⁵ Handel, 179.
- ³⁶ Handel, 178.
- ³⁷ David M. Glantz, Soviet Military Deception in the Second World War (London: Frank Cass, 1989), 2.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 8.

- ³⁹ Ibid., 150.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 154.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² Ibid., 182.
- ⁴³ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 154.
- ⁴⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, v.
- ⁴⁶ Michael Handel and Peter Paret, ed., Carl von Clausewitz: On War (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 202–203.
- ⁴⁷ Michael I. Handel, Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought, Third Revised and Expanded Edition (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 216.
- ⁴⁸ Samuel B. Griffith, Sun Tzu: The Art of War (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 77, 79.
- ⁴⁹ John G. Hathaway, “Deception Operations: Doctrinal Side Show or Operational Imperative?” (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA: 31 March 1989), 3.
- ⁵⁰ Donald J. Bacon, Second World War Deception: Lessons Learned for Today’s Joint Planner (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1998), 17.
- ⁵¹ Mark Lloyd, The Art of Military Deception (London: Leo Cooper, 1997), 122
- ⁵² Ibid.
- ⁵³ Handel, Masters of War, 217.
- ⁵⁴ Bob Preston and John Baker, “Through A Glass Darkly: Deception in the Era of Commercial Imaging Satellites and Global Transparency,” 22 February 2001. <<http://www.isanet.org/archive/darkly.html>> [27 April 2004].
- ⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶ John Pike, “Pokhran—India Special Weapons Facilities.” Pokhran—The Intelligence Failure, 25 March 2004. <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/india/pokharan-intell.htm>> [29 April 2004].

⁵⁷ Preston and Baker, 23.

⁵⁸ Godson and Wirtz, 185–186.

⁵⁹ Worldquotes.com Historic Quotes and Proverbs Archive, Sir Winston Churchill.
<<https://www.worldofquotes.com/author/Sir-Winston-Churchill/1/>> [1 May 2004].

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